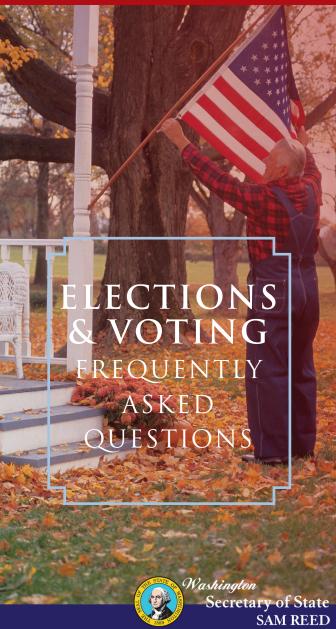
WASHINGTON STATE ELECTIONS



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Election Administration and Certification

RCW 29A.04.510

What are the duties of the Secretary of State?

The Secretary of State, through the election division, is the chief election officer for all federal, state, county, city, town, and district elections. The Secretary of State keeps records of elections held for which he or she is required by law to canvass the results, make such records available to the public upon request, and coordinate those state election activities required by federal law.

What are the duties, in relation to elections administration, of County Auditors?

The Auditor of each county is the local supervisor of all primaries and elections, general or special. It is their duty to provide places for holding such primaries and elections; to appoint the precinct election officers and to provide for their compensation; to provide the supplies and materials necessary for the conduct of elections to the precinct election officers; and to publish and post notices of calling such primaries and elections in the manner provided by law.

Are the election procedures used at the county level reviewed by the state?

A review of county election procedures may be done at the request of a County Auditor, the Secretary of State, or when a recount is required for a statewide or legislative race. All 39 counties must be reviewed every three years.

Voters and Registration

RCW 29A.08

How and where do I register to vote?

To register to vote in Washington, you must be:

- · A United States Citizen;
- · A resident of Washington State;
- 18 years of age on or before the next election; and
- If you have been convicted of a felony, you must have your rights restored before you register to vote.

You must be registered before voting. Registration forms may be obtained from your county elections department, public libraries, post offices, unemployment offices, public high schools, and universities. You can also register to vote when you apply for a driver's license or identification card at the Department of Licensing driver's licensing offices. Registration forms are available online at the Secretary of State's website.

You must not register in two or more counties or states.

How do I update the name on my voter registration?

Anyone who changes his or her name should complete an updated voter registration form.

What do I do about my voter registration when I move?

Whenever you change your residential or mailing address it is necessary to alert your county elections department of the change. This will ensure that your registration is current.

What information is required to register?

To register to vote, the following information should be included on the form:

· Full Name;

- · Date of Birth;
- · Washington Residential Address;
- Address of your former registration (if applicable);
- Mailing Address if different from your residential address;
- Gender;
- Washington State Driver License or Identification Card Number (absent either of these the last four digits of your social security number);
- Attestation of U.S. Citizenship; and
- Signature on the voter declaration.

Do I need to show ID to vote?

If you vote at a poll site, you will be required to show a copy of one of the following documents with your name at the time of voting:

- Current and valid photo identification;
- · Current utility bill;
- Bank Statement;

- Government check;
- · Paycheck;
- Voter registration identification card; or
- Government document.

The document should show your name and current Washington address. You may vote a Provisional Ballot if you do not present a required form of identification.

Do I have to register with a political party to vote?

No.

How long does the registration process take?

The voter registration process can take four to six weeks to complete. Please contact your county elections department if you have not received your voter registration card within this time.

Are voter registration forms available in other languages?

Voter registration forms are currently available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Cambodian, Korean, Laotian, Russian,

and Vietnamese.

Is voter information public information?

Certain voter registration information is public information, including your: name, date of birth, gender, voting record, date of registration, and registration number.

The address and political jurisdictions of a registered voter are also public information.

If I don't vote, does my registration expire?

No, your voter registration does not expire. You can request that your registration be cancelled or if the County Elections Department receives information that you are no longer at your address, they will put your registration in in-active status and would then cancel your registration if you did not vote in two Federal Elections. It's important to update your voter registration when changing addresses and to periodically update your signature if you are an absentee voter. Please contact your county elections department to update your voter information.

What is the Address Confidentiality Program?

The Address Confidentiality Program assists crime victims (specifically victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking) who have relocated to avoid further abuse. It helps participants keep their home, work and/or school address secret by providing a substitute mailing address. The program allows clients to register to vote without revealing their actual address. Contact information for the ACP can be found at the end of this booklet.

How is voter fraud dealt with?

Voter fraud is a class C felony punishable by five years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine. If an election official has any indication that fraud has occurred, the information is given to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation and prosecution.

What should I do if I want to file a report about a person who I suspect is not eligible to be a registered voter?

Any registered voter in Washington may challenge another voters' registration. The challenge form and procedure is available at your county elections department.

I was convicted of a felony, how do I restore my voting rights?

If you have been convicted of a crime in Washington, another state, or in Federal court, you lose your right to vote in Washington until your civil rights are restored.

In order to regain the right to vote, your civil rights must be restored. Your civil rights are restored by a certificate of discharge. When you have completed all of the requirements of your sentence, the Department of Corrections notifies the sentencing court. The sentencing court then issues and provides you with a certificate of discharge, which will have the effect of restoring your right to vote. You can then register to vote.

If you were convicted of a state crime on or before July 1, 1984 and you finished serving a suspended sentence or period of probation, you may apply to the sentencing court to have your civil rights restored. If you have been released on parole, you may

be able to obtain an order of discharge from the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board.

You may also apply to the Clemency and Pardons Board for a pardon for in-state convictions or to have your civil rights restored for convictions in another state. Contact information for the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board and the Clemency and Pardons Board can be found at the end of this booklet.

What does residence mean for the purposes of voter registration and voting?

Residence for the purpose of registering and voting means a person's address where he or she physically resides and maintains his or her home. You do not lose residence for voting purposes simply because you are no longer residing at the physical location where you are registered. This includes:

- Those employed in the civil or military service of the state or of the United States;
- Those engaged in the navigation of the waters of this state or the United States or the high seas;

- A student at any institution of learning; and
- A person confined in any public prison.

Absence from the state on business shall not affect the question of residence of any person unless the right to vote has been claimed or exercised elsewhere. Military or overseas citizens may use their last known address in Washington for voting purposes when registering. Any person without a traditional residence may use the address of a nearby public building as their residential address for precinct purposes.

My son/daughter is away at college, can they still use my address for purposes of voting?

Once a residence is established it's valid until a new residence is established. You must physically leave the previous residence with the intention of establishing a new residence at another location.

Can people subject to full or limited guardianship register to vote?

Each person under full or limited guardianship has the right to vote unless

the court determines that the person lacks the capacity to understand the nature and effect of voting such that he or she cannot make an individual choice.

Is there a minimum competency for voter registration?

Washington doesn't conduct any testing to determine voter competency.

Why can't A Power of Attorney sign my ballot?

Power of Attorney authority does not include voter registration or voting.

What are the deadlines to register for an election?

You must register at least 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote in that election. It is especially important to remember this deadline if you're using a downloaded form. Your application must be postmarked by the 30 day cutoff or it will not become effective until after the election.

If you miss the 30 day deadline, you can still register in time for the election, but you must do so in person at your county elections department no later than 15 days before the election.

What is the statewide Voter Registration Database (VRDB)?

The statewide Voter Registration Database is an interactive database connecting all 39 county voter registration databases as a single, uniform and centralized database. This will allow the state to identify duplicate registration records between counties, perform list maintenance, and verify identification of new registrations.

When will the VRDB be accessible?

Counties will have access to the statewide voter registration database after January 1, 2006.

Voting Systems

RCW 29A.12

What kind of voting equipment is used at poll sites in my county?

Poll site voting equipment is determined by the county. Current voting equipment in Washington consists of optical scan, punch card, and electronic voting devices.

Is electronic voting equipment safe and accurate?

All voting equipment in Washington is certified by the Secretary of State and tested at the federal, state, and county levels to ensure that the equipment accurately records and reports the choices made by the voter.

Under Washington State law, taking

effect in 2006, a voter verified paper trail is required for all electronic voting equipment in the state. All electronic voting machines must also print a paper record of the voters' choices so they can verify that their votes have been accurately recorded by the machine.

How is voting equipment certified?

All voting equipment in Washington must be certified by the Secretary of State prior to purchasing. Principal requirements of state certification are:

- The equipment must be tested and authorized by federallyapproved independent testing authorities before it is certified in Washington;
- State law requires all voting equipment to be certified and used in at least one other state jurisdiction; and
- The equipment is tested and reviewed by an outside panel of experts who recommend certification to the Secretary of State if the system meets the legal requirements of federal and state law.

Is it required that all poll sites be accessible to individuals with disabilities?

Federal law requires that every polling place have a voting system that is accessible to all individuals with disabilities. The law requires that the system provide individuals with disabilities the same opportunity to vote privately and independently as other voters. By 2006 all Washington poll sites must have at least one disability access voting device available.

Who should I contact if my polling place is not accessible?

Please notify your county elections department. They will offer you the choice of changing polling places or voting by absentee ballot.

How do I vote on an optical scan ballot?

Optical scan ballots are paper ballots that require you to fill in a specific area next to each candidate for whom you want to vote. Starting in 2006, every absentee voter in the state will use an optical scan ballot. Most counties also use optical scan ballots at poll sites.

Carefully read and follow all instructions that are on the ballot. There are a number of different types of optical scan ballots in Washington.

Some optical scan ballots have ovals or squares that should be filled in completely. Some optical scan ballots require you to draw a line that completes an arrow pointing to your choice.

The ballots in some counties require you to use pencil only. In other counties, you can use any dark color ink or pencil to mark your choice. Please follow the published directions.

How do I vote on an electronic voting machine?

A direct recording electronic vote tallying device presents a ballot to you on a device similar to a computer and stores your choices in multiple locations. The machine allows the voter to make choices in a variety of ways which will enable individuals with disabilities to vote.

On electronic voting machines, voters will make their choices by touching specified areas of the screen next to the candidate name or by using a tool to highlight their candidate. Visually impaired persons may use headphones that provide audio feedback which allows them to navigate through the ballot and confirm their choices. There are also devices that can be attached to these machines which enable people to vote independently even with severe limitations in the use of hands and feet.

Precinct and Polling Place Determination and Accessibility

RCW 29A.16

What multilingual services are available at poll sites?

This is a specific matter for each poll site. Please contact your county elections department to learn about multilingual services that may be available at your poll site.

Qualifications, Terms, and Requirements for Elective Office

RCW 29A.20

Who can run for office?

Any registered voter who possesses the required qualifications specific to the office sought may file a Declaration of Candidacy.

How much does it cost?

- \$1 For precinct committee officers
- \$10 For any office with a fixed annual salary of one thousand dollars or less
- 1% of the annual salary

 For any office with a salary of more than one thousand dollars per annum at the time of filing

A candidate who doesn't have the assets or income to cover the filing fee may submit a petition in lieu of the fee. The petition may substitute equal signatures of registered voters as the required dollar amount required by the filing fee.

Filing for Office

RCW 29A. 24

When and how do I file for office?

The filing period runs from the fourth Monday in July through the following Friday.

Candidates must file a Declaration of Candidacy and filing fee or petition in lieu of filing fee with the Office of the Secretary of State or with the county elections department, depending on the office.

Files with the Office of the Secretary of State:

 Federal, Statewide, State Legislators, Court of Appeals Judges, and Superior Court Judges where the office encompasses more than one county.

Files with **EITHER** the Office of the Secretary of State **OR** the county elections department:

State Legislators, Court of Appeals
Judges, and Superior Court Judges
where the office is solely within one
county.

All other filings are with the county elections department including:

- Nonpartisan offices, other than judicial or school director, where the office encompasses more than one county: Files with the county elections department of the county in which a majority of the registered voters of the district reside.
- School Directors in joint school districts file with the county elections department in the county designated by the State Board of Education.

Candidates may file by mail with either the county elections department or the Office of the Secretary of State beginning the tenth business day before the first day of filing.

Candidates may file electronically with the Office of the Secretary of State beginning at 9:00 a.m. the first day of filing through 4:00 p.m. the following Friday.

Voters' Pamphlets

RCW 29A, 32

Where can I find information about issues and candidates?

The Secretary of State produces a voters' pamphlet for every General Election which includes information on issues and voting. In even-numbered years the state voters' pamphlet also includes information on state candidates. Voters' pamphlets are distributed throughout the state, and are available electronically on the Secretary of State's website.

Why do I get a voters' pamphlet for some elections and not others?

The State Legislature allocates a budget to the Secretary of State for the production of the voters' pamphlet. The Secretary of State only produces a voters' pamphlet for primary elections if the State Legislature allocates necessary funding.

Are voters' pamphlets available in other languages or formats?

The voters' pamphlet is printed in Spanish and Chinese. The pamphlet information is also formatted in Braille, large print, and audio cassette.

Information published in the voters' pamphlet is available electronically on the Secretary of State's website.

How do political candidates get their information in a voters' pamphlet?

Candidate statements and photographs are submitted with their Declaration and Affidavit of Candidacy at the time of filing with the Secretary of State's Office or county elections department.

Ballots and Other Voting Forms

RCW 29A. 36

What is a provisional ballot and how do I vote using a provisional ballot?

A provisional ballot is a regular ballot issued to a person seeking to vote in a polling place under the following circumstances:

- The name of the voter does not appear in the poll book;
- The voter's name is in the poll book but there is an indication that the voter was issued an absentee ballot, and the voter wishes to vote at the polls;
- The voter fails to produce identification when required; or

 Other circumstances as determined by the precinct election official.

How is my ballot secured after I have voted?

FOR ABSENTEES AND VOTE BY MAIL BALLOTS:

Some counties conduct all their elections by mail. All absentee and vote by mail ballots are kept in secure storage when they are not being processed. Processing includes the verification of signatures and postmarks, removing the inner envelope from the outer envelope, and removing the ballot from the inner envelope. Ballots are secured with numbered seals and a log is kept of the seal numbers or another method of secure storage in order to detect any inappropriate access.

FOR POLL SITE BALLOTS:

Ballots at the poll site are deposited into sealed or locked containers that are not opened until the ballots are ready to be tabulated. A detailed record is made using a ballot accountability form that will accompany the ballots back to the counting center. Two election officials, one representing each major political party, shall transfer the sealed ballot

containers to the counting center or a designated collection station.

How do I find out if my provisional or mail ballot was counted?

After the election you may contact your county elections department to confirm that your ballot was counted.

Will my ballot count if I choose not to vote on certain issues or candidates? Absolutely.

Absentee Voting

RCW 29A.40

What are absentee ballots and how do I get one?

You may choose to mark the box on the voter registration form to request an ongoing absentee ballot. You will receive a ballot by mail for each election in which you are eligible to vote. If you choose not to receive an absentee ballot automatically, and your county does not vote all by mail, you may either vote at the polls or request an absentee ballot for any given election. If you decide at a later time you would like to receive a ballot by mail for each election, you may do so by written request to your county elections department.

When are absentee ballots mailed?

Absentee ballots have to be available in

the County Auditor's office 20 days prior to the election. In addition, the County Auditor's office must mail all ballots to voters 18 days prior to an election or primary.

If I'm on vacation or have moved, will my ballot be forwarded?

Some counties may allow absentee ballots to be forwarded. However, the best thing to do is contact your county elections department and notify them of a temporary change in your mailing address. You should also contact them when you return to the address where you're registered to vote.

Will my vote count if I forgot to seal my ballot in the security envelope?

Absolutely.

Are votes 100% confidential?

There are procedures in place for every county elections department that ensure all votes, at the polling place and by absentee ballot, are confidential. The only time it may not be is when a ballot is faxed to your county election department. In which case you would have to sign a waiver of secrecy.

When might a signature be rejected?

If the county elections department determines that your signature did not match the signature on your original voter registration, they're required to notify you to present an opportunity to update your signature prior to the certification of the election.

Polling Place Elections and Poll Workers

RCW 29A. 44

How do I find out which precinct I'm in and where I vote?

After you're registered to vote you'll receive an identification card in the mail from your county elections department. The voter registration card will include your precinct number and the designated poll site to cast a ballot.

What do poll workers do?

- Pick up supplies prior to Election Day;
- Set up and open the poll sites at 7:00 a.m.;
- · Identify voter in the poll book;
- Issue the correct ballot to the voter;

- Ensure that the ballot goes in the ballot box;
- Issue provisional ballots;
- Assist voters as requested;
- Close the poll site at 8:00 p.m.;
- Reconcile the number of ballots to the poll books; and
- Transport the ballots to the counting center.

Are poll workers trained and/or certified?

Absolutely. In fact Auditors are required to provide all poll workers, prior to each state primary or general election, with training to the proper and professional conduct of their assigned duties.

Are poll workers compensated for their service?

Most county election offices compensate poll workers.

To inquire about becoming a poll worker, contact your county elections department.

Primaries and Elections

RCW 29A. 52

What is the purpose of the Primary?

A primary is held to reduce the number of candidates who will advance onto the General Election ballot.

When are elections held?

The Washington State Constitution provides that General Elections shall be held on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

The Primary is held on the third Tuesday of the preceding September or the seventh Tuesday immediately preceding the General Election, whichever comes first. Special elections may be held on:

· The first Tuesday after the first

Monday in February;

- The second Tuesday in March;
- The fourth Tuesday in April; or
- The third Tuesday in May.

Special Circumstance Elections

RCW 29A. 56

What is the recall process for elected officials?

Every elected public officer in Washington, with the excluding of judges in courts of record, is subject to recall and discharge by the legal voters of the state.

A recall motion is based on a judgment that an officer committed some act or acts of malfeasance or misfeasance while in office, or has violated the oath of office.

A petition demanding the recall must bear the equal number of valid signatures based on a percentage of total votes of all candidates in the said office. Then a special election is called as provided by the general election laws. The percentage of signatures necessary to put a recall vote on the ballot is:

- 25%—State officers, other than judges, senators and representatives, city officers of cities of the first class, school district boards in cities of the first class; county officers of counties of the first, second and third classes.
- 35%—Officers of all other political subdivisions, cities, towns, townships, precincts, and school districts not herein mentioned, and state senators and representatives.

Canvassing

RCW 29A. 60

When are election results considered final and certified?

State law requires each County Canvassing Board and the Secretary of State to certify election results 10 days after a primary or special election and 21 days after a General Election.

Who is on the Canvassing Board and what do they do?

The County Canvassing Board consists of the County Auditor, the County Prosecuting Attorney, and the chair of the County Legislative Authority, which is usually a County Commissioner. They are responsible for processing absentee ballots, determining provisional ballot validity, hearing voter registration challenges, administering recounts,

determining voter intent with regard to write-in votes and questionable ballots, and certifying the election. The board may delegate some of these responsibilities to election staff.

Recounts

RCW 29A. 64

What determines whether there's a recount or not?

A recount is the process where the county elections department simply retabulate all the ballots that were counted in the original count.

During the count, final determinations are made by the County Canvassing Board on what votes will be counted. The recount does not allow a review of decisions by the County Canvassing Boards of what constitutes a vote. Thus, the same ballots counted in the original count will simply be retabulated.

Washington law authorizes a mandatory machine recount if the election returns are:

- Within one half of one percent of all votes cast for the office; and
- Within 2,000 votes for a statewide office.

If the final returns from the counties report that a statewide office race is within 2,000 votes, a mandatory machine recount will be conducted.

State Initiative and Referendum

RCW 29A. 72

What is an initiative?

An initiative is the direct power of voters to enact new laws or change existing laws. Any registered voter, acting individually or on behalf of an organization, may propose an initiative. Initiatives allow voters to petition for proposed legislation on the ballot. However, the initiative process cannot be used to amend the State Constitution.

What is the difference between an Initiative to the People and an Initiative to the Legislature?

The initiative process is the direct power of the voters to enact new laws or change existing laws. It allows the electorate to place proposed legislation on the ballot by using public petitions. An initiative cannot be used to amend the State Constitution.

There are two types of initiatives:

- Initiatives to the People, if certified to have sufficient signatures are submitted for a vote of the people at the next state general election.
- Initiatives to the Legislature, if certified, are submitted to the Legislature at its regular session each January. Once submitted, the Legislature must take one of the following three actions:
 - 1. The Legislature can adopt the initiative as proposed, in which case it becomes law without a vote of the people;
 - 2. The Legislature can reject or refuse to act on the proposed initiative, in which case the initiative must be placed on the ballot at the next state general election; or
 - 3. The Legislature can approve an amended version of the

proposed initiative, in which case both the amended version and the original proposal must be placed on the next state general election ballot.

Initiatives submitted to the people that do not deal with gambling or lottery measures require a simple majority of voter approval to become law.

Gambling and lottery measures require a 60 percent voter approval to become law.

To be certified to the ballot or Legislature, the sponsor of either type of initiative must first circulate the complete text of the proposal among voters and obtain a number of legal voter signatures equal to eight percent of the number of votes cast for the office of Governor at the last regular gubernatorial election.

What is a referendum?

There are two types of referenda:

- A referendum bill; and
- A referendum measure.

The primary purpose of both is to give

voters an opportunity to approve or reject laws either proposed or enacted by the Legislature. The only acts that are exempt from the power of referendum are emergency laws—those that are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health or safety, and the support of state government and its existing institutions.

The two types of referenda are:

- Referendum Bills are proposed laws referred to the electorate by the Legislature.
- Referendum Measures are laws recently passed by the Legislature that are placed on the ballot because of petitions signed by voters.

Referendum measures must be certified by the Secretary of State to have a number of petition signatures of legal voters equal to four percent of the total votes cast for the office of Governor in the last regular gubernatorial election.

A referendum certified to the ballot that *does not* deal with gambling or lottery requires a simple majority of voter approval to become law.

A referendum certified to the ballot

dealing with gambling or lottery requires a 60 percent voter approval to become law.

What is the difference between referendum bills and referendum measures?

Referendum bills are proposed laws referred to the voters by the Legislature.

Referendum measures are laws recently passed by the Legislature that are placed on the ballot because of petitions signed by voters.

Any registered voter, acting individually or on behalf of an organization, may demand, by petition, that a law passed by the Legislature be referred to a vote of the electorate prior to its going into effect (except for emergency legislation, which is exempt from the referendum process).

Congressional Districts and Appointment

RCW 9A, 76A

How would I determine what my Legislative and Congressional district is?

To locate your congressional and legislative district, visit the State Legislature's online District Finder at: www.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx

Political Parties

RCW 29A. 80

What involvement do the political parties have with election administration?

County election departments are required to request political party observers for all phases of the election process. This includes: processing absentee ballots, receipt of ballots at the counting center, inspection of ballots, and tabulating ballots.

Each election department is responsible for administering elections that elect precinct committee officers, who are precinct representatives of the political parties. The political parties are responsible for providing each county election departments with appropriate lists of potential poll workers.

Military and Overseas Voters

Can I vote if I am in the military or live overseas?

Generally, all U.S. citizens, 18 years or older who are or will be residing outside the United States during an election period, are eligible to vote using an absentee ballot in any election for Federal office. In addition, all members of the Uniformed Services, their family members and members of the Merchant Marine and their family members, who are U.S. citizens, may vote absentee in federal, state and local elections. In Washington you may register and vote using your last residence address in this state.

How do I register to vote while living overseas?

Send your completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to the elections department in the county where your voting residence is located or to the Secretary of State.

The online version is available at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website, **www.fvap.gov**.

The form must be printed, completed, signed, dated, and placed in an envelope affixed with proper postage. Then please mail the form to your county election department or the Secretary of State.

If I live abroad can I register or vote at my Embassy?

Currently there aren't any provisions for in-person voting or onsite registration to be conducted at U.S. embassies or consulates. However, embassy and consulate officials may assist U.S. citizens in completing FPCA forms for their state, which is used for both registering to vote and for requesting an absentee ballot.

How do I apply for an absentee ballot?

Use the FPCA. It's accepted by Washington State as an application for registration and for an absentee ballot. It is postage-free when placed in the U.S. mail. You may also submit a written request for a ballot to your county elections department.

What is a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)?

Military personnel and their voting age dependants both in the United States and overseas, and U.S. citizens overseas may be able to use a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) available through Voting Assistance Officers at military installations or at U.S. embassy/consulate. Washington accepts all eligible election contests to be voted on this ballot.

When should I receive my mail-in ballot?

Typically, county election staff begin mailing ballots to citizens 20 days before a primary or election. If you have not received your ballot one week before the election, contact the FVAP Ombudsman Service or your county elections department or the Secretary of State.

When should I return my completed ballot?

Your ballot must be returned to the county elections department or postmarked on or before the date of the election. If you are an overseas, out-ofstate, or military voter, the date you sign the oath on the envelope constitutes a postmark.

Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

What is the Help America Vote Act?

The Help America Vote Act is a federal law enacted in response to a number of administrative issues exposed during the 2000 General Election. This significant piece of national election reform affects nearly every facet of elections in the United States.

The law created a bipartisan Election Assistance Commission and expanded the role of the federal government in elections through mandates, standards, and funding. Key aspects of the Act include updating voting equipment, expanding disability access, providing provisional ballots, allowing people to vote by mail, creating statewide voter registration lists, training poll workers, and educating voters.

How do I submit a complaint?

Title III of HAVA outlines requirements for uniform and non-discriminatory election technology and administration. An individual who believes that a violation of any provision of Title III has occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur, may file a complaint with the Secretary of State. All complaints must be in writing, notarized and filed within 30 calendar days after the certification of the election at issue and sent to the Secretary of State. The state shall make a final determination within 90 days of receiving the complaint.

Miscellaneous Elections & Voting Information

What is inactive voting status?

An inactive voter is one who has an invalid address in the voter registration database. This information may be discovered when an elections office sends out a piece of mail that cannot be forwarded, such as a voter registration card. If it is returned to the county with no new address information from the post office, or an address that is outside of the jurisdiction, the voter is made inactive and a confirmation card is mailed to any address that is available for that voter. An inactive voter is cancelled if they remain inactive after four years, or through two federal elections. Voter registration may be activated again by updating your address at the poll site, at the elections office, or by signing a petition.

What is considered voter intent?

Washington is a "voter intent" state. State law provides that votes will not be rejected if it can be determined how the voter intended to cast their vote. The County Canvassing Board is the only authority who may determine voter intent.

What is meant by ballot inspection?

Before ballot tabulation begins, ballots are carefully checked to ensure that all intended votes will be counted by the electronic ballot tabulator. If needed, a ballot may be duplicated onto another ballot or sent to the County Canvassing Board for clarification. When ballots are tabulated at the poll site, they are inspected by the voter before being placed into the tabulator. In all counties, absentee ballots are always visually inspected prior to tabulation

When is the latest I can turn in my completed ballot?

Ballots may be postmark or deposited at a designated location before 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Is Vote by Mail safe?

Safeguards against fraud as implemented by county election departments ensures that every signature on an absentee or mail-in ballot matches the signature on the original voter registration record. The only signatures checked at polling places are for provisional ballots.

Are there language mandate requirements?

The state or county must provide voting registration, notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information when there is a 5% population of citizens of a single language minority.

When are absentee ballots counted?

Absentee ballots are tabulated after the polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Is personal information shared among various governmental agencies?

Each agency has different laws regarding the use and access of personal information. However, under the National Voter Registration Act, the Department of Licensing will share change of address information with election offices when you renew your driver's license.

Some voter registration information, such as an address change within a county, may be done over the phone, but new registrations, transfers from one county to another, and cancellations must be done in writing to the local elections office or the Secretary of State.

County Election Departments in Washington State

In Washington, elections are administered at the county level by County Auditors (except King County, which has a Director of the Department of Records, Elections, and Licensing). These offices are available to help you with registering to vote, requesting an absentee ballot, and other election related services.

Adams

210 W. Broadway Ave. Ritzville WA 99169-1897 Phone: 509-659-3249

www.co.adams.wa.us/auditor/elections.aspx

Asotin

PO Box 129

Asotin WA 99402-0129 Phone: 509-243-2084

Email: ejohnston@co.asotin.wa.us

www.votewashington.org

Benton

PO Box 470

Prosser WA 99350-0470 Phone: 509-736-3085

Email: elections@co.benton.wa.us

www.co.benton.wa.us

Chelan

PO Box 400

Wenatchee WA 98807-0400

Phone: 509-667-6808

Email: elections.ballots@co.chelan.wa.us

www.co.chelan.wa.us

Clallam

233 F. 4th. St.

Port Angeles WA 98362 Phone: 360-417-2221

Email: auditor@co.clallam.wa.us

www.clallam.net

Clark

PO Box 8815

Vancouver WA 98666-8815 Phone: 360-397-2345

Email: elections@clark.wa.gov www.clark.wa.gov/elections

Columbia

341 F., Main St.

Dayton WA 99328-1361 Phone: 509-382-4541

www.columbiaco.com/auditor

Cowlitz

207 4th Ave.. N..

Kelso WA 98626-4193 Phone: 360-577-3005

www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/elections

Douglas

PO Box 456

Waterville WA 98858-0456 Phone: 509-745-8527

Email: elections@co.douglas.wa.us

www.votewashington.org

Ferry

350 E. Delaware Ave Republic WA 99166 Phone: 509-775-5200

Email: elections@co.ferry.wa.us www.votewashington.org

Franklin

PO Box 1451

Pasco WA 99301-1451 Phone: 509-545-3538

Email: dkillian@co.franklin.wa.us www.co.franklin.wa.us/elections

Garfield

PO Box 278

Pomeroy WA 99347-0278 Phone: 509-843-1411

www.votewashington.org

Grant

PO Box 37

Ephrata WA 98823-0037

Phone: 509-754-2011 ext. 343 Email: elections@co.grant.wa.us

www.co.grant.wa.us/auditor/Elections

Grays Harbor

100 Broadway Ave. W.. Montesano WA 98563-3614

Phone: 360-249-4232

Email: ghcelections@co.grays-harbor.wa.us www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/auditor

Island

PO Box 5000

Coupeville WA 98239-5000

Phone: 360-679-7366 Fax: 360-240-5553

Email: elections@co.island.wa.us www.islandcounty.net/auditor

Jefferson

PO Box 563

Port Townsend WA 98368-0563

Phone: 360-385-9117 Fax: 360-385-9228

Email: karenc@co.jefferson.wa.us www.co.jefferson.wa.us/auditor

King

500 4th Ave.

Seattle WA 98104-3280 Phone: 206-296-8683 Fax: 206-296-0108

Email: elections@metrokc.gov www.metrokc.gov/elections

Kitsap

1026 Sidney Ave.

Port Orchard WA 98366-4206

Phone: 360-337-5769 Fax: 360-337-4645

www.kitsapgov.com/aud/elections/elections

Kittitas

205 W. 5th St.

Ellensburg WA 98926-3129

Phone: 509-962-7503 Fax: 509-962-7687

www.co.kittitas.wa.us/auditor/elections

Klickitat

205 Columbus St. S..

Goldendale WA 98620-9279

Phone: 509-773-4001 Fax: 509-773-4244

www.klickitatcounty.org/Auditor

Lewis

PO Box 29

Chehalis WA 98532-0029 Phone: 360-740-1278

https://fortress.wa.gov/lewisco/home/

Lincoln

PO Box 28

Davenport WA 99122-0028

Phone: 509-725-4971

www.votewashington.org

Mason

PO Box 400

Shelton WA 98584-0400

Phone: 360-427-9670 ext.469 Email: pas@co.mason.wa.us

Okanogan

PO Box 1010

Okanogan WA 98840-1010 Phone: 509-422-7240

www.okanogancounty.org/Auditor

Pacific

PO Box 97

South Bend WA 98586-0097

Phone: 360-875-9317

www.co.pacific.wa.us/elections

Pend Oreille

PO Box 5015

Newport WA 99156-5015

Phone: 509-447-3185

Email: countyelection@pendoreille.org

www.co.pend-oreille.wa.us

Pierce

2401 S. 35th St.

Tacoma WA 98409-7484 Phone: 253-798-7430

www.piercecountywa.org/auditor

San Juan

PO Box 638

Friday Harbor WA 98250-0638

Phone: 360-378-3357 Fax: 360-378-8856

Email: elections@co.san-juan.wa.us www.co.san-juan.wa.us/elections

Skagit

PO Box 1306

Mount Vernon WA 98273-1306

Phone: 360-336-9305 Fax: 360-336-9429

Email: scelections@co.skagit.wa.us

www.skagitcounty.net

Skamania

PO Box 790

Stevenson WA 98648-0790

Phone: 509-427-9420 Fax: 509-427-4165

Email: elections@co.skamania.wa.us www.skamaniacounty.org/Auditor

Snohomish

3000 Rockefeller Ave. Everett WA 98201-4061 Phone: 425-388-3444

Fax: 425-259-2777

www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/

Auditor

Spokane

1033 W. Gardner

Spokane WA 99260-0020 Phone: 509-477-2320

Fax: 509-477-6607

Email: elections@spokanecounty.org www.spokanecounty.org/elections/

Stevens

215 S. Oak St.

Colville WA 99114-2836

Phone: 509-684-7514 / 866-307-9060

Fax: 509-684-8310

Email: elections@co.stevens.wa.us

www.co.stevens.wa.us/auditor/election/

index.htm

Thurston

2000 Lakeridge Dr. SW Olympia WA 98502-6090 Phone: 360-786-5408

Email: auditor@co.thurston.wa.us

www.co.thurston.wa.us/auditor/Elections/

electns.htm

Wahkiakum

PO Box 543

Cathlamet WA 98612-0543

Phone: 360-795-3219

Email: tischerd@co.wahkiakum.wa.us

www.votewashington.org

Walla Walla

PO Box 1856

Walla Walla WA 99362-0356

Phone: 509-524-2530

Email: elections@co.walla-walla.wa.us www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/departments/

auditor/htm/elections.htm

Whatcom

311 Grand Ave.

Bellingham WA 98225-4038

Phone: 360-676-6742

Email: elections@co.whatcom.wa.us

www.co.whatcom.wa.us/auditor/election_

division/index.jsp

Whitman

PO Box 350

Colfax WA 99111-0350 Phone: 509-397-6270

www.votewashington.org

Yakima

128 N. Second St.

Yakima WA 98901-2639 Phone: 509-574-1340

www.co.yakima.wa.us/vote

Washington State Agencies

Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division

520 Union Avenue SE Olympia, WA 98504 PO BOX 40229 Olympia, WA 98504-0229

(360) 902-4180 (800) 448-4881 (800) 422-8683 TDD/TTY

Email: elections@secstate.wa.gov

www.vote.wa.gov

Legislative Information

Legislative Information Center 106 Legislative Building Olympia, WA 98504-0600

If you have questions or need information, send an e-mail message to:

support@leg.wa.gov or (360) 786-7573.

You may send a brief message to your district legislators through the toll-free hotline number:

(800) 562-6000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Office of the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives P. O. Box 40600 Olympia, WA 98504-0600 (360) 786-7750 www.leg.wa.gov/House/Representatives

SENATE

Office of the Secretary of the Senate P. O. Box 40482 Olympia, WA 98504-0482 360-786-7550 www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Senators

Restoring Your Right to Vote

INDETERMINATE SENTENCE REVIEW BOARD

PO Box 40907 Olympia, WA 98504-0907 (360) 493-9266 www.wa.gov/isrb

CLEMENCY AND PARDONS BOARD

Office of the Governor PO Box 40002 Olympia, WA 98504-0002 (360) 902-4111(voice) (360) 753-4110 (fax) (360) 753-6466 (TTY/TDD)

Address Confidentiality Program

(800) 822-1065 (Washington only) (800) 664-9677 TTY

(360) 753-2972 (Out of State) (360) 664-0515 TTY

Email: acp@secstate.wa.gov